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From: Enck, Judith
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Schumer calls for EPA to release PFOA and PFOS contamination guidelines

By Kevin O'Toole

May 12, 2016, 5:33 pm

WASHINGTON (NEWS10)

Senator Charles Schumer called on the U.S. Department of Environmental Protection (EPA) Thursday to release updated drinking water guidelines for PFOA and PFOS-related contamination.

PFOS and PFOA are both used in the manufacturing of a wide variety of commercial and consumer products. Both chemicals are extremely persistent in the environment and resistant to natural environmental degradation.

Sen. Schumer says the toxicity and bioaccumulation of PFOA and PFOS can pose a serious risk to human health, which is why the EPA must act quickly to issue guidelines regarding acceptable levels of contamination.

Sen. Schumer says PFOA and PFOS guidelines from the EPA are long overdue.

"The EPA must publish its new PFOA and PFOS guidelines – yesterday," said Schumer. "They promised to do it by spring, and here we are in May. Communities

The announcement comes in response to the recent discoveries of PFOA and PFOS contamination in the drinking water of New York communities like Hoosick Falls, Newburgh, and Petersburg.

The PFOA discovered in Hoosick Falls was linked to the use of PFOA to manufacture products at the McCaffrey Street plant, now owned by Saint Gobain Performance Plastics.

Schumer says these incidents in Upstate New York underscore the need for the EPA to arm New York communities with the most up to date and accurate information in regards to acceptable levels of contamination, so the necessary steps are taken to ensure the health of the public and the environment.

WAMC

Schumer Urges EPA To Update Contaminated Drinking Water Guidelines

By Lucas Willard

15 hours ago

Credit WAMC Photo by Dave Lucas

U.S. Senator Charles Schumer is urging the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency to update its drinking water guidelines for chemical contaminants recently found in some upstate New York water supplies.

Schumer is asking the EPA to immediately release new drinking water guidelines for PFOA- and PFOS-related contaminations.

The industrial chemicals have recently turned up in water supplies in Newburgh and Hoosick Falls. Elevated levels of the perfluorinated chemicals can cause serious health effects.

Schumer says communities "need clear guidelines" from EPA to develop steps to protect public health.

Also this week, Congressman Chris Gibson asked for a federal investigation into the federal and state response into PFOA contamination cases in Rensselaer County.

NH NPR

Study Links PFOA With Breast Feeding Problems

By Howard Weiss-Tisman

19 hours ago

The Department of Health will hold three additional blood clinics in Bennington.

Howard Weiss-Tisman / VPR

Mothers with a concentration of PFOA in their blood have a greater likelihood of ending breastfeeding early, according to a new study in the journal Environmental Research.

PFOA was an unregulated chemical that's been phased out. It's been found in private water wells in North Bennington and Bennington, as well as in a public water source in Pownal.

The authors of the study looked at 336 mothers in Cincinnati who live near a plant that has emitted high volumes of the chemical.

The women had a 77 percent greater risk of ending breastfeeding by three months, and a 41 percent greater risk of ending breastfeeding by six months, according to the study.

The authors say animal studies suggest that PFOA can disrupt mammary gland development.

The chemical might also affect milk-protein genes, making the milk less palatable or limiting its supply.

"These should be on our radar as chemicals that might be affecting women's ability to breastfeed," said lead author Megan Romano, a postdoctoral scholar in the Brown University School of Public Health.

Romano says she would like to do more studies to see if the chemical disrupts hormones in people the way it appears to in animals.

The Vermont Department of Health has begun testing the blood of people with contaminated wells.

The health department announced this week that it will offer three additional free blood clinics in late May and June for people who are affected by the PFOA contamination.

Three more blood clinics slated for those affected by PFOA

Residents must register by May 31

By Edward Damon

berkshireeagle.com

05/12/2016

BENNINGTON >> Residents will have more opportunities this spring to have their blood tested for a potentially harmful chemical.

Health officials will hold three additional free blood draw clinics for Bennington-area residents affected by PFOA contamination.

"The blood tests will measure the level of PFOA in an individual's blood, and this can be compared to levels measured by CDC's National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES) for adults and older children in the U.S.," according to a news release issued Wednesday by the state Department of Health (DOH). "Most adults have low levels of PFOA in their blood."

A clinic for students returning from college will be held on Tuesday, May 24. Two more clinics for residents will be held Friday, June 24, and Tuesday, June 28, according to the DOH.

The free clinics will be held by appointment only at the DOH offices at 324 Main St. Residents must register by Tuesday, May 31.

To begin the registration process, complete the online survey at:
<http://survey.healthvermont.gov/s3/PFOA-Blood-Draw-Registration>

The federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and Southwestern Vermont Medical Center are assisting the state with the tests. The first free clinic was held April 29. At the time, DOH Commissioner Harry Chen said about 100 people were expected to have their blood drawn that day and about 300 people had signed up.

Advertisement

PFOA, or perfluorooctanoic acid, has turned up in some 225 private water supplies around Bennington and the village of North Bennington. Also called C8, the man-made chemical was used for years to make the non-stick coating Teflon. Studies have linked PFOA exposure with thyroid disease, high cholesterol, colitis, and pregnancy-induced hypertension, as well as kidney and testicular cancers. Officials suspect the contamination source is the former ChemFab/Saint-Gobain facility, which manufactured woven fiberglass fabrics coated with Teflon. The state is also investigating contamination in Pownal, where PFOA was found in a municipal water supply serving the village of Pownal. Neither the town of Bennington's or village of North Bennington's public water systems contain PFOA.

To be eligible for a blood test: (1) The state Department of Environmental Conservation must have tested the well of the home in North Bennington or Bennington where you live now, or where you lived any time in the past eight years. Or, (2) You currently work or live, or you have ever worked or lived, at the former ChemFab/Saint-Gobain site at 940/1030 Water St. in North Bennington.

It could take several months before the results are reported by the CDC lab, officials say.

"The only thing sent to the CDC are de-identified blood test results," Chen told reporters at an April 29 press event. "We will take care of all the confidential info. We'll also take responsibility for connecting results to the individual and providing the best information we can, which unfortunately, isn't as clear as we're used to."

More information about the PFOA blood test clinics is available at:
http://healthvermont.gov/enviro/pfoa_clinics.aspx

For more information about PFOA and health concerns, visit

<http://healthvermont.gov/enviro/pfoa.aspx>, or call the DOH at 800-439-8550 weekdays 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

NH BUSINESS REVIEW

DES lists 44 NH facilities as potential PFC users

Manufacturing sites are located in 8 of 10 counties

By Liisa Rajala

Published: May 9, 2016

Forty-four New Hampshire manufacturing facilities have been identified by the NH Department of Environmental Services as potential past or present users of PFC compounds, the family of chemicals that has been identified as causing water contamination in a 1.5-mile radius around the Saint-Gobain Performance Plastics plant in Merrimack.

In late April, NH Business Review reported that the DES, through its Air Resources Division and Hazardous Waste Management Bureau, was approaching manufacturers that may have used perfluorinated chemicals, or PFCs, to determine if additional water sampling would be necessary elsewhere in the state.

This news follows the expanded 1.5-mile water sampling radius around the Saint-Gobain plant, after synthetic perfluorooctanoic acid (known as PFOA) was found in levels varying ranging from less than 100 parts per trillion to 400 parts per trillion in nearby residential wells and the Merrimack Village District Water System.

In 2009, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency set short-term exposure limits at 400 parts per trillion.

Although awaiting a long-term exposure advisory from the EPA, New Hampshire's current long-term health advisory standard is 100 parts per trillion, in line with Maine, New York and EPA Region 2's lifetime advisory levels.

Proactive approach

The 44 facilities are operated by 40 different companies. They are located around the state, in eight of New Hampshire's 10 counties (the DES lists no sites in Coos and Carroll counties).

The sites have been identified as potential past or present users of PFCs, which are used to produce non-stick coatings utilized for a number of applications, including wires, fabrics and other materials.

In April, Jim Martin, public information officer at DES, told NH Business Review there was "potential" for incidents like wastewater spills at a facility using PFCs. He also said the agency was "looking very closely at air emissions and what the emissions may have been and how much PFOA may have been included in air emissions."

In Vermont, the Department of Environmental Conservation took a similar proactive approach after tests in an area surrounding a former Saint-Gobain site in North Bennington produced PFOA results ranging from 40 parts per trillion to 2,800 parts per trillion.

The Vermont agency identified 11 different sites, including operating and abandoned manufacturing facilities, where it will proactively test water samples, said Danika Frisbie, public information coordinator.

In Vermont, Frisbie said, the agency found that the wire coating industry, the semiconductor industry and locations where firefighting foam was used repeatedly “might have released PFOA into the environment.”

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